

# SEALED DRAWINGS



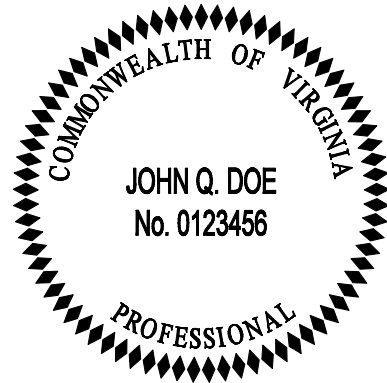
**Fairfax County**  
**VIRGINIA**

## Land Development Services

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services

Hours of Operation: Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Friday: 9:15 to 4:00 p.m.

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Visit us on the web at: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes)

This publication provides guidelines to determine when drawings for commercial and residential construction are required to be signed and sealed by a registered design professional

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## GOVERNING REGULATIONS

The Code of Virginia requires that building drawings, which meet the specific criteria outlined in Section 54.1 402 be signed and sealed by the responsible design professionals. These criteria differ for general (building), electrical, plumbing and mechanical designs. Included within this publication are quick reference charts which will determine if a signature and seal is required.

## DESIGN PROFESSIONAL

Design professionals are architects or engineers licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia; licenses from other states or jurisdictions are not accepted.

## SEAL REQUIREMENTS

Each drawing sheet shall be signed, sealed and dated by the architect or engineer responsible for the design; a signed, sealed and dated cover sheet may substitute for this requirement if the cover sheet contains a table of contents. All signatures and dates must be originals; the sealed imprint may be copied.

Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all County programs, services and activities and will provide this document in alternative formats and in different languages upon request. Please call 703-324-5033, TTY 711 or write DPWES, Room 659, the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035-5506. Please allow at least seven working days for preparation of material.

## CHART A – GENERAL DESIGN

A proposed structure which is classified within any of the categories marked "Yes" requires an A/E seal on the documents. Separate requirements apply as to when the electrical, plumbing or mechanical systems in such structures require an A/E seal (see Charts B and C).

GROUP	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AREA (SQ. FT.)			HEIGHT (STORIES)	
		5,000 OR LESS	5,001 TO 15,000	OVER 15,000	3 OR LESS	OVER 3
A <sup>1</sup>	ASSEMBLY	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
B	BUSINESS	—	YES	YES	—	YES
E	SCHOOLS & DAY CARE CENTERS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
F	FACTORY & INDUSTRIAL	—	—	YES	—	YES
H	HIGH HAZARD	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
I	INSTITUTIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
M	MERCANTILE	—	YES	YES	—	YES
R-1	HOTEL, MOTEL & DORMITORY	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
R-2 <sup>7</sup>	MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	—	—	YES	YES	YES
R-3	2 FAMILY ATTACHED	—	—	YES	—	YES
R-4	RESIDENTIAL ASSISTED LIVING	—	—	YES	—	YES
R-5	1 & 2 FAMILY DWELLINGS	—	—	YES	—	YES
S	STORAGE (NON-FARM)	—	—	YES	—	YES
U	UTILITY & MISCELLANEOUS	—	—	YES	—	YES
ALL	INTERIOR DESIGN	SEE NOTE NUMBER 4				

Notes: (Apply the following notes to all categories as applicable.)

1. Churches are exempt if building does not exceed 5,000 square feet or three stories, and the occupant load does not exceed 100.
2. A local building code official may require an A/E seal even if not required to do so by this chart.
3. The law requires that, where an A/E seal is not present, the plans must be signed by the individual (not company) responsible for the design, including the individual's occupation and address.
4. Additions, remodeling or interior design defined under § 54.1-400 of the Code of Virginia might not require an A/E seal. For construction, additions or remodeling resulting in a change in occupancy, occupancy load, modification to the structural system, change in access or egress or an increase in fire hazard an A/E seal is required in accordance with § 54.1-400, although notes 1 and 2 still apply.
5. Any unique design of structural elements for floors, walls, roofs or foundations requires an A/E seal, regardless of whether or not the remainder of the plans require such certification.
6. Buildings, structures, or electrical and mechanical installations which are not otherwise exempted but which are of standard design, provided they bear the certification of a professional engineer or architect registered or licensed in another state, and provided that the design is adapted for the specific location and conformity with local codes, ordinances and regulations, and is so certified by a professional engineer or architect licensed in Virginia may not require an A/E seal.
7. One exit and three stories or less Group R-2 buildings would normally be exempted from an A/E seal except where required by Note 2. Most all other three stories or less Group R-2 multi-family buildings are required by the building officials to have A/E seals for the construction documents.

## CHART B – ELECTRICAL DESIGN

A proposed electrical system which is classified within any of the categories marked "Yes" requires an A/E seal on the construction documents. Those NOT marked "Yes" may not require an A/E seal only if designed by a licensed master electrician or Class A electrical contractor (see Notes 2 and 3). Separate requirements apply as to whether the mechanical systems or the general design of such structures require an A/E seal (see Charts A and C).

GROUP	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	HEIGHT (STORIES)		OCCUPANT LOAD		VOLTS		AMPS	
		3 OR LESS	OVER 3	100 OR LESS	OVER 100	600 OR LESS	OVER 600	800 OR LESS	OVER 800
A-1	THEATERS	—	YES	—	YES	—	YES	—	YES
A-2	RESTAURANTS, NIGHTCLUBS	—	YES	—	—	—	YES	—	YES
A-3	DANCE HALLS, CHURCHES	—	YES	—	—	—	YES	—	YES
A-5	GRANDSTANDS, ETC.	—	YES	—	—	—	YES	—	YES
B	BUSINESS	—	YES	—	—	—	YES	—	YES
E	SCHOOLS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
F	FACTORY & INDUSTRIAL	—	YES	—	—	—	YES	—	YES
H	HIGH HAZARD	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
I	INSTITUTIONAL (I-1, I-2 & I-3)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
I-4	DAY CARE/NURSERIES	—	YES	—	YES	—	YES	—	YES
M	MERCANTILE	—	YES	—	—	—	YES	—	YES
R	RESIDENTIAL	—	YES	—	YES	—	YES	—	YES
S	STORAGE	—	YES	—	—	—	YES	—	YES
U	UTILITY & MISCELLANEOUS	—	YES	—	—	—	YES	—	YES

**Notes:** (Apply the following notes to all categories as applicable.)

1. A local building official may require an A/E seal for electrical work even if not required to do so by this chart.
2. The law requires that, where an A/E seal is not present, the plans must be signed by the individual (not company) responsible for the design, including the individual's occupation and address.
3. The above chart applies both to new construction and to additions or remodeling.
4. The exemption for electrical contractors and electricians is applicable only when both design and installation are under their direction or control.

## CHART C – PLUMBING AND MECHANICAL DESIGN

A proposed plumbing or mechanical system which is classified within any of the categories marked "Yes" requires an A/E seal on the construction documents. Those NOT marked "Yes" may not require an A/E seal only if designed by a person licensed as a master plumber, master mechanical worker, or Class A contractor in those specialties by written examination (see Notes 3 and 5). Separate requirements apply as to whether the electrical system or the general design of such structures requires an A/E seal (see Charts A and B).

GROUP	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	HEIGHT (STORIES)		OCCUPANT LOAD		THRESHOLD LEVEL <sup>1</sup>	
		3 OR LESS	OVER 3	100 OR LESS	OVER 100	BELOW	ABOVE
A-1	THEATERS	–	YES	–	YES	–	YES
A-2	RESTAURANTS, NIGHTCLUBS	–	YES	–	–	–	YES
A-3	DANCE HALLS, CHURCHES	–	YES	–	–	–	YES
A-5	GRANDSTANDS, ETC.	–	YES	–	–	–	YES
B	BUSINESS	–	YES	–	–	–	YES
E	SCHOOLS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
F	FACTORY & INDUSTRIAL	–	YES	–	–	–	YES
H	HIGH HAZARD	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
I	INSTITUTIONAL (I-1, I-2 & I-3)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
I-4	DAY CARE	–	YES	–	YES	–	YES
M	MERCANTILE	–	YES	–	–	–	YES
R	RESIDENTIAL	–	YES	–	YES	–	YES
S	STORAGE	–	YES	–	–	–	YES
U	UTILITY & MISCELLANEOUS	–	YES	–	–	–	YES

Notes: (Apply the following notes to all categories as applicable.)

1. The "Threshold Level" is defined in the law as "Plumbing and mechanical systems using packaged mechanical equipment, such as equipment of cataloged standard design which has been coordinated and tested by the manufacturer, which comply with all applicable codes. These mechanical systems shall not exceed gauge pressures of 125 pounds per square inch, other than refrigeration, or temperatures other than flue gas of 300° F (150° C) ... ."
2. A local building official may require an A/E seal for plumbing and mechanical systems even if not required to do so by this chart.
3. The law requires that, where an A/E seal is not present, the plans must be signed by the individual (not company) responsible for the design, including the individual's occupation and address.
4. The above chart applies to both new construction and to additions or remodeling.
5. The exemptions for plumbers, HVAC workers, and mechanical contractors are applicable only when both design and installation are under his/her direction or control.